



TOWN HALL
4 Boltwood Avenue
Amherst, MA 01002-2351

Community Development Committee
(413) 259-3040
(413) 259-2410 [Fax]

MEMORANDUM

TO: Town of Amherst Boards & Committees
FROM: Community Development Committee (CDC)
RE: 2012 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application Process
DATE: June 8, 2011

Mini-Entitlement Status - The Town of Amherst is one of ten Mini-Entitlement communities in Massachusetts that can apply to the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) for up to \$1,000,000 in CDBG funding through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). As a Mini-Entitlement community, Amherst has been designated by DHCD to receive an allocation of CDBG funds due to the community's "high statistical indication of need, poverty rate and size."

Each year, the Town must apply to receive those funds, and in accordance with HUD regulations, CDBG funds must be awarded primarily to projects, programs, and services that improve the lives of Amherst's low- and moderate-income residents (defined as individuals or families whose annual income does not exceed 80% of the Area Median Income as determined by HUD), and be located in an identified neighborhood or target area. In addition, 20% of the funding must be for social service activities, 60% for non-social service activities and the remaining funds are for administrative purposes.

2012 CDBG Application Timeline - The Community Development Committee (CDC) is pleased to announce the start of the 2012 CDBG planning process. The following table provides a timeline for the 2012 CDBG application process:

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| June | Community input to help refine Community Development Strategy |
| July | Community input to help refine Community Development Strategy |
| August | Early-August (tentative hearing date of Aug. 3): Community Development Strategy public hearing to be held by the Planning Board |
| | Mid-August (tentative issue date of Aug. 12): CDC to issue RFP's seeking project applications |
| September | Mid-September (tentative due date of Sept. 14): RFP's due |
| | Mid-September (tentative hearing date of Sept. 20): CDC to hold public hearing to provide applicants time to present project proposals |
| October | Mid-October (tentative hearing date of Oct. 11): CDC holds public hearing to announce its recommendations to the Town Manager for CDBG funding |
| November | Town staff and CDC to complete application |
| December | December 16, 2011: Town's CDBG Application due |

The application and planning process will begin in June and July with community input as the CDC works with the Amherst Planning Board to revise Amherst's Community Development Strategy. A public hearing on the draft Strategy will be held by the Planning Board in early August. The Strategy is meant to be a comprehensive, integrated approach to the municipality's community development priorities, summarizing public purposes set out in the principal planning documents used by the Town of Amherst. The Strategy is not a plan specific only to CDBG eligible activities.

Accordingly, the Community Development Committee invites Amherst residents and Town boards/ committees to review the current 2011 Strategy (available online at <http://ma-amherst3.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=1122>) and to contact Associate Planner Nathaniel Malloy at mallovn@amherstma.gov or fax #413-259-2402 with suggestions and recommendations regarding general community-wide goals, activities to be undertaken by the Town, and target areas. Please submit these comments in writing, by email or fax by **Friday, July 29, 2011.**

Information gathered during this phase of the process will help the CDC identify priorities for funding.

Following the development of the Strategy, in late August, the CDC will issue requests for proposals from the community to help determine which projects receive funding. These proposals can be submitted by various parties, including but not limited to a single individual (i.e. a developer), a Town board / committee (in partnership with an organization or the Town), or a non-profit organization. Proposals are presented to the CDC at a public hearing, and are evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Location of proposed project—is it in a Target Area or village center?
- A budget detailing the project, including total budget and all other sources of funding
- Project Feasibility—can the project be completed within the allotted time (typically 18 months)?
- A general description of the project
- Statement indicating how the project achieves national objectives (i.e., benefits the low- and moderate-income population of Amherst) and which populations are served.
- Impact of project on identified needs of community
- Demonstrate consistency with the Community Development Strategy
- Demonstrate consistency with Amherst's Master Plan
- Supporting documents, as necessary
- Demonstrated support of other Amherst Town boards and committees with responsibility over relevant public interest.

Full proposals from 2011 can be viewed online at <http://ma-amherst3.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=1122>. After reviewing proposals, the CDC makes its recommendations for funding to the Town Manager, who ultimately decides which projects and activities are submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development as part of the Town's CDBG application.

cc: Community Development Committee